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DISCUSSION

Dr Eva Rzuclido (*Lebanon, NH*). It seems that we are doing a good job of protecting the fetus, but we are not doing a good job of protecting the mother. And so that is a problem for not only women but for men. Do you have any recommendations for that?

Dr Venita Chandra. Certainly, actually when looking at some of the previous studies in this area, overall radiation exposures during the past few years have decreased. I believe this is evidence that we are doing a good job of understanding and focusing on safety mechanisms. Some important ones include wearing appropriate lead, stepping away from the digital subtraction angiography during the digital subtraction angiography runs, using the other protective mechanisms around, and minimizing as much as you can the amount of fluoroscopy time used.

Dr John Ricotta (*Washington, DC*). A follow-up to that last comment. In the three institutions, is there a formal radiation safety course? How much actual training are the surgeons, and particularly the fellows, getting in terms of how to prevent radiation exposure or reduce radiation exposure?

Dr Chandra. There are not actually many formal training or formal guidelines for this, which is quite shocking to me. I certainly hope that bringing this up in a national forum will lead to more formal discussion and decision making on guidelines and a potential curriculum.

Interventional cardiologists do have such a curriculum apparently, but not many places in vascular surgery do.

Dr Amy Reed (*Hershey, Pa*). I will just follow-up with that. Currently the state of Pennsylvania requires 8 hours of safety training and then an annual review. So it is different from state to state.

One of the things we are going to try to do at the program directors' level is to try and incorporate more of the radiation safety training so that when our trainees come out, no matter what state they go to they should have documented training.

Currently, our interventional cardiology fellows training programs are recognized by most states as having adequate radiation safety training. So it is certainly something that I think we need to provide for all of our trainees.